

## HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE HOLDS A HEARING ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAQ

SEPTEMBER 26, 2002

HUNTER: The committee will come to order.

Today, the Committee on Armed Services continues its review of United States policy toward Iraq. This morning's hearing marks the fourth in a number of planned public sessions designed to educate and inform the committee and the American people on the various issues surrounding Iraq's continued violation of numerous United Nations resolutions, its illicit development of weapons of mass destruction, and the threat that Saddam Hussein poses to the United States, the Middle East, and the international community.

The committee has received a classified briefing from the intelligence community in each of the last three weeks, which we also opened to all members of the House in the last several weeks. We also heard from former UNSCOM inspectors about Iraq's illicit weapons programs and Saddam Hussein's persistent efforts to thwart U.N. inspections and we heard from an Iraqi defector who was a leader in Saddam's nuclear weapons program.

He told us how the Iraqis built and sustained their weapons of mass destruction programs through the acquisition of Western technology and how the United States own export control system may have contributed to the problems we are now facing with Iraq, and I thought most interestingly he told about how even as our inspectors were on the ground in '93 a few miles away, they were moving the weapons program with great efficiency. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld appeared before the committee last week to discuss and defend the administration's policy toward Iraq, and yesterday morning the committee met behind closed doors with several retired generals to hear their views on this critical issue with a special focus on military options.

The committee is planning on holding another hearing next week, next Wednesday on the topic of U.S. policy toward Iraq. Today, however, we will hear from two well-known gentlemen who have distinguished themselves in the world of foreign and defense policy. The Honorable Richard Perle is a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and Chairman of the Defense Policy Board, and General Wesley Clark, United States Army (ret.) is Managing Director Merchant Banking at the Stephens Group, Inc., and a former commander-in-chief of the United States European Command, and gentlemen we greatly appreciate you being with us this morning and sharing your wisdom and your viewpoints.

We want to thank you for being with us, and I also want to inform the full committee that this very robust schedule of hearings, both public hearings and classified hearings, are being done at the direction of the chairman of the full committee, Bob Stump. It was his feeling that we needed to educate not only members of the

committee but as many members of the House as we possibly could on this issue so that they can make an informed judgment when it comes time to vote, and I might let folks know that I think now we've had about 120 non-committee members appear and listen in on the classified briefings that we've been holding.

So, we're going to continue with these hearings and our goal is to see to it that every single member of the House who desires to have a classified briefing on this issue before this vote has an opportunity to do it, as well as to attend, of course, our public hearings.

Before we begin, I want to turn to my good friend, the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Skelton, the ranking member, to offer any comments he might have.

SKELTON: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

I welcome Mr. Perle, General Clark. We look forward to your testimony.

And, Mr. Chairman, to shorten the hearing just a bit, I ask that my prepared statement be entered in the record, and state that this is a very crucial and critical time for us in this country regarding proposed action against Iraq.

The president has made it clear to Congress, the United Nations, and the American people that he has a determination to remove Saddam Hussein from power, and there are a number of questions that need to be answered in my opinion such as what can still be done before we must compel Iraq with use of force? What's the threshold beyond which the United States can no longer wait for Iraqi compliance with Security Council resolutions?

To me the aftermath and all of us know and understand and appreciate the high capability of the American fighting force. What do we do in the aftermath? This, in my opinion, looms as the Damocles sword over whatever might be successful de-weaponization of that Iraqi regime.

So where do we go from here? And I hope our witnesses can give us the benefit of their wisdom on these and the other issues that come forth surrounding this very, very important issue that we in America face.

Thank you.

HUNTER: I thank the gentleman.

And, Mr. Perle, great to see you. I'm glad that Washington traffic, while it held you up, didn't totally block you from getting into the city. Thank you for being with us. You've been with us many times, and I know all the members have appreciated your wisdom and insight. The floor is yours, sir.

PERLE: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for including me in today's hearing. As we confront issues of war and peace, our country is strongest when the Congress and the Executive Branch act in concert. In all the talk of a need for a coalition to confront Saddam Hussein, the coalition that matters most is to be found here in Washington at opposite ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. The president, Secretary Powell, Secretary Rumsfeld, and most recently British Prime Minister Blair have all spoken in recent days about the urgency of dealing with the threat posed to

the American people and others by Saddam Hussein.

In what may well be the most important speech of his presidency, President Bush has argued eloquently and in my view persuasively to the United Nations in New York that Saddam's open defiance of the United Nations and his scornful refusal to heed its many injunctions is a challenge to the credibility of the United Nations itself and he has rightfully asked the United Nations to approve a Security Council resolution that would force Saddam to choose between full compliance with the many resolutions he has scorned and violated and action to remove his regime from power.

Saddam's response calculating, deceitful, and disingenuous, moves only slightly in the direction of U.N. inspections of Iraqi territory and not at all toward the disarmament that is what really matters. The statement issued in his name that he will accept inspections unconditionally is anything but unconditional. It is hedged as to the allowable types of inspection and the rules under which inspections will be conducted. As I understand it, Saddam is demanding an inspection regime in which advanced notification is required, and in which certain places are off limits to the inspectors who would be limited in number, mobility, and armament.

Even from a government whose cooperation we can count on, these conditions would be unacceptable, but from Saddam Hussein, who has gone to enormous lengths to conceal his weapons program from previous international inspectors and continues to lie about them now, the sort of inspection regime that Kofi Annan has negotiated with Saddam would be a farce, not simply inadequate, Mr. Chairman, a farce.

What would a robust inspection regime look like? It would at a minimum include tens of thousands of inspectors with Americans in key leadership and decision making roles distributed throughout Iraq; possessing an independent capability to move anywhere from dispersed bases to any site in the country without prior notification or approval; the right to interview any Iraqi or Iraqi resident together with his family at a safe location outside Iraq; appropriate self defense capabilities for the inspectors so they could overcome efforts to impede them and the like.

And let me just observe in passing that the inspection team that is being readied has significantly downgraded the presence and the role of Americans. The senior most American as I understand it is in charge of training. The critical function of activity evaluation, that is to say what to make of the bits and pieces of evidence that may fall into the hands of the inspectors is in the hands of a Chinese official, so one has, I think, good reason to worry about whether an inspection arrangement even if it is put in place will in itself have the capability and the integrity that one would associate with a robust inspection arrangement.

Iraq is a very large country. My own view and I'm speaking personally throughout but especially in this, my own view is that even with a large and intrusive force, it is simply not possible to devise an inspection regime on territory controlled by Saddam Hussein that could be effective in locating, much less eliminating, his weapons of mass destruction. In any case, the inspection regime known as UNMOVIC doesn't even come close. Its size, organization, management, and resources are all hopelessly inadequate for the daunting task of inspecting a country the size of France against Saddam's determined program of concealment, deception, and lying.

The simple truth is that the inspectors will never find anything the location of which

has not been discovered through intelligence operations. Unless we can obtain information from defectors or by technical means that points the inspectors to specific sites, we are most unlikely to find what we are looking for. We know, Mr. Chairman, that Saddam lies about his program to acquire nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

We know that he has used the years during which no inspectors were in Iraq to move everything of interest with the result that the database we once possessed, in adequate though it was, has been destroyed. We know all this, yet I sometimes think there are those at the United Nations who treat the issue, not as a matter of life and death, but rather more like a game of pin the tail on the donkey or an Easter egg hunt on a sunny afternoon.

The bottom line is this: Saddam is better at hiding than we are at finding and this is not a game. If he eludes us and continues to refine, perfect, and expand his arsenal of chemical and biological weapons, the danger to us which is already great will only grow. If he achieves his Holy Grail and acquires one or more nuclear weapons, there is no way of knowing what predatory policies he will pursue.

Let us suppose that in the end a robust inspection arrangement is put in place, and after a year or two it has found nothing. Would we conclude from the failure to unearth illegal activity that none existed? Of course not, all we would know is that we had failed to find what we were looking for, not that it was not there to be found, and where would that leave us?

Would we be safer or even more gravely imperiled? There would be a predictable clamor to end the inspection regime and, if they were still in place, to lift the sanctions. Saddam would claim, not only that he was in compliance with the U.N. resolutions concerning inspections, but that he had been truthful all along. There are those who would believe him.

Given what we now know about Saddam's weaponry, his lies, his concealment, we would be fools to accept inspections even an inspection regime far more ambitious than anything the U.N. contemplates as a substitute for disarmament. That is why, Mr. Chairman, the president is right to demand that the United Nations promptly resolve that Saddam comply with the full range of United Nations resolutions concerning Iraq or face an American-led enforcement action.

I returned last night from Europe where the issues before you were being widely discussed. Perhaps the most frequently asked question put to me by various Europeans is why now? What is it about the current situation that has made action to deal with Saddam urgent? He's been there for a decade. My answer is that we are already perilously late. We should have acted long ago and we should certainly have acted when Saddam expelled the inspectors in 1998.

Our myopic forbearance has given him four years to expand his arsenal without interference, four years to hide things and make them mobile, four years to render the international community feckless and its principal institution, the United Nations, all but irrelevant. We can, of course, choose to defer action.

Some counsel that, to wait and hope for the best. That is what Tony Blair's predecessors did in the 1930s. That is what we did with respect to Osama bin Laden. We waited. We watched. We knew about the training camps and fanatical incitement

and the history of acts of terror. We knew about the Cole and the embassies in Africa. We waited too long and 3,000 innocent civilians were murdered.

If we wait, if we play hide and seek with Saddam Hussein, there is every reason to expect that he will expand his arsenal further, that he will cross the nuclear divide and become a nuclear power. I urge this committee, Mr. Chairman, to support the president's determination to act before it is too late. Thank you.

HUNTER: Thank you, Mr. Perle. I appreciate your statement.

And, General Clark, you have been a very well-respected leader of the U.S. military through some difficult times for the United States and we appreciate your service and thank you very much for being with us on this very challenging issue. The floor is yours, sir.

CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Representative Skelton, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

This is a committee that's been very strongly supportive of the men and women in uniform, and I want to thank you personally for the support that so many of you have given to me during some very, very tough times when I was in uniform, and on behalf of all the men and women and their families, we really appreciate this committee.

Your commitment, your willingness to give us your own time to come out and visit with the troops, your determination toward interests on the behalf of the troops and families when there is nothing but your duty as representatives of the people on the line, and we recognize it and we appreciate it and we're grateful for it.

I want to tell you also that I'm very honored to be here because I believe that in our democracy, discussion of critical, strategic issues, and this is certainly one, at an historic time strengthen the United States. They don't weaken us. Public information, public dialogue, and public discussion is what this country is all about, and certainly when we're considering a course as fraught with uncertainty as that which appears to be unfolding before us, we need the wholehearted understanding and resolution of the American people.

And I'm particularly honored, Mr. Chairman, that you would ask me as a retired military officer to come back and appear before you and that you will consider my opinions and concerns relevant to the issue at hand, even though that I've left the United States Army and I'm not engaged in another profession which is under question, investment banking, and so I'm delighted to be with you, sir. I have submitted a written statement but I would like to summarize.

HUNTER: Welcome back, General.

CLARK: Thank you, sir. I would like to summarize just a few points from it. I think there's no question...

(UNKNOWN): And, General, without objection your statement will be taken into the record.

CLARK: Thank you, sir. There's no question that Saddam Hussein is a threat. I was in the joint staff in October of 1994. I think the date was -- I think it was the 8th of October. It was a Thursday morning. The intelligence officer walked in and said, "Sir, you're not going to believe this. Here are the pictures. You can't believe it. This is the Republican Guard. They're right back in the same attack positions that they occupied four years ago before they invaded Kuwait and here are the two divisions and there are signs of mobilization and concerns north, and we can't understand it."

And General Peay was the commander of CENTCOM. Shalickashvili, I think was, visiting Haiti at the time with Secretary of Defense Perry, and we rushed together, we put together a program. General Peay deployed some 15,000 American troops and aircraft over to block it and after a few days, Saddam Hussein recognized what a difficult position he put himself in and withdrew the troops. But, we had not expected it. It was an unanticipated move. It made no sense from our point of view for Saddam Hussein to do this but he did it. It was signaled warning that Saddam Hussein is not only malevolent and violent but he is also to some large degree unpredictable at least to us.

I'm sure he has a rationale for what he's doing, but we don't always know it. He does retain his chemical and biological capabilities to some extent and he is, as far as we know, actively pursuing nuclear capabilities, though he doesn't have nuclear warheads yet. If he were to acquire nuclear weapons, I think our friends in the region would face greatly increased risks as would we. Saddam might use these weapons as a deterrent while launching attacks against Israel or his other neighbors.

He might threaten American forces in the region. He might determine that he was the messenger of Allah and simply strike directly at Israel, or Israel weighing the possibilities of blackmail or aggression might feel compelled to strike Iraq first.

Now, Saddam has been pursuing nuclear weapons and we've been living with this risk for over 20 years. He does not have the weapons now as best we can determine. He might have the weapons in a year or two if the control for the highly-enriched uranium and other fissionable materials broke down. I think his best opportunity would have been to go to his friend Slobodan Milosevic and ask for those materials during the time of the Kosovo campaign, since there was active collusion between the Serbs and the Iraqis, but apparently if he asked for them he didn't get them because the Serbs have turned them over for us.

If he can't get the highly-enriched uranium, then it might take him five years or more to go through a centrifuge process or gaseous diffusion process to enrich the uranium, but the situation is not stable. The U.N. weapons inspectors who, however ineffective they might have been and there's some degree of difference of opinion on that, nevertheless provided assistance in impeding his development programs. They've been absent for four years, and the sanction regime designed to restrict his access to weapons materials and resources has been continuously eroded, and therefore the situation is not stable.

The problem of Iraq is not a problem that can be postponed indefinitely, and of course Saddam's current efforts themselves are violations of international law as expressed in the U.N. resolutions. Our President has emphasized the urgency of eliminating these weapons and weapons programs. I strongly support his efforts to encourage the United Nations to act on this problem and in taking this to the United Nations, the president's clear determination to act if the United States can't --

excuse me, if the United Nations can't provides strong leverage for under girding ongoing diplomatic efforts.

CLARK: But the problem of Iraq is only one element of the broader security challenges facing our country. We have an unfinished worldwide war against Al Qaida, a war that has to be won in conjunction with friends and allies and that ultimately will be won as much by persuasion as by the use of force. We've got to turn off the Al Qaida recruiting machine. Now some 3,000 deaths on September 11th testify to the real danger from Al Qaida, and I think everyone acknowledges that Al Qaida has not yet been defeated.

As far as I know, I haven't seen any substantial evidence linking Saddam's regime to the Al Qaida network, though such evidence may emerge. But nevertheless, winning the war against Al Qaida and taking actions against the weapons programs in Iraq, that's two different problems that may require two different sets of solutions. In other words, to put it back into military parlance, Iraq they're an operational level problem. We've got other operational level problems in the Middle East, like the ongoing conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Al Qaida and the foundation of radical extremist fundamentalist Islam, that's the strategic problem.

We've got to make sure that in addressing the operational problem we're effective in going after the larger strategic problem. And so, the critical issue facing the United States right now is how to force action against Saddam Hussein and his weapons programs without detracting from our focus on Al Qaida or our efforts to deal with other immediate mid and long-term security problems.

I'd like to offer the following observations by way of how we could proceed. First of all, I do believe that the United States diplomacy in the United Nations will be strengthened if the Congress can adopt a resolution expressing U.S. determination to act if the United Nations can not act. The use of force must remain a U.S. option under active consideration.

Such congressional resolution need not, at this point, authorize the use of force. The more focused the resolution on Iraq, the more focused it is on the problems of weapons of mass destruction. The greater its utility in the United Nations, the more nearly unanimous the resolution, the greater its utility is, the greater its impact is on the diplomatic efforts under way.

The president and his national security team have got to deploy imagination, leverage, and patience in working through the United Nations. In the near term, time is on our side and we should endeavor to use the United Nations if at all possible. This may require a period of time for inspections or the development of a more intrusive inspection regime such as Richard Perle has mentioned, if necessary backed by force. It may involve cracking down on the eroding sanctions regime and countries like Syria who are helping Iraq illegally export oil enabling Saddam Hussein to divert resources to his own purposes.

We have to work this problem in a way to gain worldwide legitimacy and understanding for the concerns that we rightly feel and for our leadership. This is what U.S. leadership in the world must be. We must bring others to share our views not be too quick to rush to try to impose them even if we have the power to do so. I agree that there's a risk that the inspections would fail to provide evidence of the weapons program. They might fail, but I think we can deal with this problem as we

move along, and I think the difficulties of dealing with this outcome are more than offset by the opportunities to gain allies, support, and legitimacy in the campaign against Saddam Hussein.

If the efforts to resolve the problem by using the United Nations fail, either initially or ultimately, then we need to form the broadest possible coalition including our NATO allies and the North Atlantic Council if we're going to have to bring forces to bear. We should not be using force until the personnel, the organizations, the plans that will be required for post conflict Iraq are prepared and ready. This includes dealing with requirements for humanitarian assistance, police and judicial capabilities, emergency medical and reconstruction assistance and preparations for a transitional governing body and eventual elections, perhaps even including a new constitution.

Ideally, the international/multinational organizations will participate in the readying of such post conflict operations, the United Nations, NATO, other regional organization, Islamic organizations, but we have no idea how long this campaign could last, and if it were to go like the campaign against the Afghans, against the Taliban in which suddenly the Taliban collapsed and there we were.

We need to be ready because if suddenly Saddam Hussein's government collapses and we don't have everything ready to go, we're going to have chaos in that region. We may not get control of all the weapons of mass destruction, technicians, plans, capabilities; in fact, what may happen is that we'll remove a repressive regime and have it replaced with a fundamentalist regime which contributes to the strategic problem rather than helping to solve it.

So, all that having been said, the option to use force must remain on the table. It should be used as the last resort after all diplomatic means have been exhausted unless there's information that indicates that a further delay would represent an immediate risk to the assembled forces and organizations. And, I want to underscore that I think the United States should not categorize this action as preemptive. Preemptive and that doctrine has nothing whatsoever to do with this problem.

As Richard Perle so eloquently pointed out, this is a problem that's longstanding. It's been a decade in the making. It needs to be dealt with and the clock is ticking on this. Obviously once initiated, a military operation should aim for the most rapid accomplishment of its operational aims and prompt turnover to follow on organizations and agencies, and I think if we proceed as outlined above, we may be able to minimize the disruption to the ongoing campaign against Al Qaida.

We could reduce the impact on friendly governments in the region and even contribute to the resolution of other regional issues, perhaps such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, Iranian efforts to develop nuclear capabilities and Saudi funding for terrorism. But there are no guarantees. The war is unpredictable. It could be difficult and costly and what is at risk in the aftermath is an open-ended American ground commitment in Iraq and an even deeper sense of humiliation in the Arab world which could intensify our problems in the region and elsewhere.

The yellow light is flashing. We have a problem. We've got to muster the best judgment in this country. We've got to muster the will of the American people and we've got to be prepared to deal with this problem, but time is on our side in the near term and we should use it. Thank you.

HUNTER: Thank you, General Clark. General Clark, when we went into Desert Storm, our best estimate and the United Nations' best estimate was that Saddam Hussein was three to five years away from having a nuclear system. That information to some degree was the basis upon which very distinguished Americans, like Sam Nunn, said what you've just said today, which is time is on our side, and they offered a policy that involved sanctions over a long period of time.

When we arrived, we found that he was, according to the United Nations and inspectors who have testified before this committee, six months away from having a nuclear weapon, meaning that the judgments and the time is on our side argument was one that was greatly in error, and had we taken it, we would have been perhaps suffered disastrous consequences.

Now, we've had inspectors appear before this committee who have said that they were turned away when they were close to things that they thought were important. They were held off in parking lots. They were ushered into a lot of empty rooms. They never met with the weapons community and out of the 200 and some odd inspections that they made; almost none of them were a surprise.

The upshot of their testimony was that if Saddam Hussein wants to keep us from seeing his chemical, biological, and nuclear complex, and he denies even that he has a chemical or biological complex, he will succeed. We then followed that testimony with that testimony of an Iraqi nuclear engineer who was very much at the forefront of Saddam Hussein's programs who said essentially while you Americans were inspecting in 1993, we were continuing to move aggressively not far away with a weapons program right under your noses basically.

Now, everything that you've told us with respect to the time is on our side argument is based on the presumption that these inspections can be successful. What can you offer us in terms of how we could have more effective inspections and how we could, against the will of Saddam Hussein, actually walk into a room and have a large piece of evidence of a nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons program in front of us on the table when our inspectors arrive? Please tell us how we can do that, what we haven't been able to do before.

CLARK: Well, Mr. Chairman, **first of all I'm not making my case on the presumption that inspections** will necessarily be effective. That's not the case. I think an inspection program will provide some impedance and interference with Saddam's efforts. I think it can undercut the legitimacy and authority of his regime at home. I think it can provide warning of further developments. I think it can establish a trigger. I think it can build legitimacy for the United States.

Ultimately, it's going to be inadequate in the main but as far as the intelligence is concerned and the time available, I don't know how to make sense of the intelligence. I mean we've heard six months from the CIA. We've heard the latest British estimate of a couple of years. We've heard other people say a year. We've heard Iraqi defectors saying it's ready. All he has to do is just machine the plutonium if he can get his hands on it.

The honest truth is that the absence of intelligence is not an adequate reason to go forward to war in and of itself, and so what we have to do is we have to build a program that builds, that encourages other nations to share our perspective. We can

do it relatively quickly. We should not discard inspections. They have done some measure of good, otherwise Saddam wouldn't object to them so strongly. So, if we take...

HUNTER: But now, General Clark, if we embark on these inspections and we accept inspections as the answer, as the end, and we embark on these inspections and we must presume that Saddam Hussein is as successful as he's been in the past at hiding the evidence from the inspection teams, evidence that we knew existed, how are we going -- you've mentioned that if we do these inspections, we're somehow going to galvanize the community of nations on our side.

Now if we do inspections and we don't find that which we know is there, but Saddam Hussein has allowed us to come into the country and absorb the inspectors successfully, how does that galvanize a community of nations to rally behind the United States?

CLARK: Well, I think you have to have an echelon series of inspections. I think you start small and I think you expand the intrusiveness, the scope and the scale of the inspections, and I think you do that until you are either satisfied and the nation which brings the complaint to the United Nations, i.e. the United States, is satisfied, or you cross and trip a red line in which Saddam says no and you move to the next stage.

But I'm not presuming that inspections will be successful. What I'm asking you to consider is the United States overall leadership responsibilities in the world and how we move ahead collectively with our allies and friends around the world to deal with this problem. What inspections are useful in doing is they're useful in highlighting the nature of the Iraqi regime, and we may deter him, impede him, undercut him, get warning and establish a trigger and build our legitimacy from this, and this is one way of proceeding.

HUNTER: Would you recommend very aggressive, very intrusive inspections, which would be accompanied by forces which could, in cases where inspectors are denied entry, literally force their way into Iraqi facilities?

CLARK: I would like to see a program like that established but it would not be the initial program.

HUNTER: But what if the United Nations does not end up ordering those inspections but nonetheless, but instead orders inspections which to some degree replicate those that went in the past, those which were not successful in removing this program? What would you recommend at that point?

CLARK: I think we need to give the president the strongest possible leverage to get the right program put in place at the United Nations, and that leverage...

HUNTER: But that would require consensus from other members of the United Nations. That's not a unilateral instrument for the United States.

CLARK: That's correct and one of the difficulties that we have...

HUNTER: Let me finish my question. Don't you think that it is not reasonable to expect that the United Nations is going to produce an extremely aggressive, backed

by force, inspection regime?

CLARK: I think that the president's determination has given us strong leverage to get the kind of commitment from the United Nations that we need, but every country has its own domestic problems, and this requires the energy and imagination of our diplomats to work through this. I don't consider this case lost at this point. I think it's very much up in the air. I think the actions of this body are very important to determining the outcome.

But I will say this, that the administration has not proceeded heretofore in a way that would encourage its friends and allies to support it. One of the problems we have is the overhang from a number of decisions taken by the administration which have undercut its friends and allies around the world and given the impression that the United States doesn't respect the opinions of other.

So, we're swimming a little bit upstream on this, but I think a strong resolution from this body sent up promptly with broad support and narrowed the focus on the problems of weapons of mass destruction would give additional leverage, and I would urge that it be adopted.

HUNTER: Mr. Skelton.

SKELTON: Thank both of you for your excellent testimony. We do appreciate it. As I see it, there are four basic elements to this whole issue. Number one is the diplomacy which you have discussed a la the United Nations, exhausting that all the way if at all possible.

Number two, establishing the real goal, and that goal in my opinion is the disarmament of that country and I'm convinced that along with that the Saddam Hussein regime will fold. Third is how we fight and get it done should that happen, and fourth is the one that personally troubles me the most because that's what we have to live with.

General, in your prepared statement you said that force should not be used until the personnel and organizations to be involved in post-conflict Iraq are identified and ready to assume their responsibilities and I couldn't agree with you more. You further say this includes requirements for humanitarian assistance, police, and judicial capabilities, emergency medical and reconstruction assistance, preparation for a transitional governing body, eventual elections perhaps, even including a new constitution.

Suppose everything works out smoothly, including the military action and we do have a first-rate military. We all agree on that. Tell us more than what you have here of the potential dangers that are out there. The Kurds are sitting up there in the north. The Iranians are not going to be idly bystanders. The country is made up of some 60 percent Shiite, and we all know the Baath Party and Saddam Hussein are all Sunnis.

What chance is there for anarchy? What do you do with the henchmen that would be on the secondary tier of a regime that have carried out the unspeakable orders of Saddam Hussein and his people? What do you do with the scientist engineers, or is there a possibility of a true peaceful transition to a responsible state in addition thereto? What about the other countries like Syria, and I mentioned Iran, and their

influence on this whole post-conflict Iraq? And, I would also ask the same question of Mr. Perle -- General.

CLARK: This is a very important question and particularly because we're trying to not only eliminate the weapons of mass destruction but end up with a situation in which we're net better off than we are today. We have to look at this question very seriously. I think much depends on the circumstances of the military operation itself as to what the impact will be and how long it will take. I think the broader the coalition, the stronger the preparations in advance, the smoother the operation is likely to be, the more rapid Saddam's army will collapse, and the less humanitarian hardship is likely to be imposed.

That having been said once we move into the area, what we can expect is a complete breakdown of governmental authority. It's not only Saddam Hussein but it's the people who, as you suggested, the henchmen and all of the people who are complicit in that regime who have illegally confiscated land, carried out his orders for executions and torture, and forced name changes and identity changes. Revenge will be exacted.

We've already seen a replay or a (inaudible) to this in what happened in 1991 with the Shia rebellion in southern Iraq when they thought we were coming in to help them liberate Iraq, and so we have to imagine a complete breakdown of order. That will be accompanied no doubt by a breakdown in the distribution of services, water, food. It's possible that Saddam Hussein may use biological weapons. If so, it's very possible he would use them against his own people. In an effort to impede our advance, he might very well try to solve the problem of the Shias in the south through the use of biological weapons.

And so, we really don't know what we're going to face. So in the immediate aftermath, there's going to be the possibility of a chaotic environment that's going to require a substantial American presence as well as a vast humanitarian governmental structure to meet the needs of the 23 million Iraqi people.

Then we're dealing with the longer mid term, the mid term problems. Will Iraq be able to establish a government that holds it together or will it fragment? There are strong factionary forces at work in Iraq and they will continue to be exacerbated by regional tensions in the area. The Shia in the south will be pulled by the Iranians.

The Kurds want their own organization. The Kurds will be hemmed in by the Turks. The Iraqis also, the Iranians also are nervous of the Kurds. But nevertheless, the Kurds have a certain mass and momentum that they've built up. They will have to work to establish their participation in the government or their own identity.

There's a question of the nature of a successor regime. Will it, if it's a strong man, will it be any better? Will we really get rid of the weapons of mass destruction or will someone emerge in this chaos who says "Look, I've overthrown Saddam. You Americans can deal with me. I'm the guy in charge right now. Here you can have your weapons of mass destruction. We're not interested." Then how do we know we've really got all the weapons of mass destruction out of there?

Or, has he knowing this is the Middle East, he's dealing with an Iranian neighbor who has weapons of mass destruction. He's dealing with Syria who has weapons of mass destruction does he decide to hang onto a nuclear and chemical last resort capability

as a trump card? So, you have the question of the successor regime and then you have the problem of the long-term presence of the American forces in the region. One of the things that we've seen is that when you put American forces into a region, we tend to be a lightning rod.

In the case of Kosovo, we're the strongest element there and the Albanians look to us for protection. In the case of Iraq, we're going to be infidels in a Muslim land, and one of the things that's going to happen when you break the authority of Saddam Hussein is that you're going to have a resurgence of support for the Muslims in the region by the radical elements, both Sunni -- or both Wahhabi and Shia and they will be in there and they will be preaching anti-Americanism.

And, as we take the necessary actions with our force in the occupation or some have termed it the liberation of Iraq, we're going to put Americans in a position where they have to exercise authority. We're not going to enforce Islamic law, so there are a number of fundamental issues that are troublesome in the long run. We need to put together the right organizations and people to think through these issues and be ready to deal with them because you could look at a potential requirement to implement this plan less than two weeks after the initiation of hostilities.

SKELTON: Thank you.

HUNTER: Mr. Saxton.

PERLE: Did you want my comment on that?

HUNTER: Oh, Mr. Perle.

PERLE: Let me first observe that when it comes to inspections that are so obviously flawed, my friend and colleague is wildly optimistic. When it comes to dealing with problems that we're quite right to anticipate, he's wholly pessimistic and I think the only conclusion you can draw is that he's come down on the side of waiting, of resorting to the dream that inspections will solve this problem.

It is absolutely right to be concerned about what follows the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power. On this I'm rather more optimistic than General Clark, first of all because Iraq, unlike Afghanistan for example or some other countries in the region, has a highly-educated and sophisticated population that has suffered horribly under Saddam Hussein, that is in my view desperate to be liberated from Saddam Hussein, and that has begun to show quite remarkable unity among the opponents of Saddam Hussein as the prospect of action to remove him has become more real.

Sure there are lots of potential divisions. I was in London the other day and dropped in on a meeting of some of the Iraqi opposition and arrayed around that table in serious discussion were representatives of all the groups that General Clark referred to as in conflict with one another.

Now, that doesn't guarantee that there won't be some confusion. It doesn't guarantee that individual groups will not depart from what they now say they pledge themselves to, but I've been impressed with the ability of the Iraqi National Congress to bring together around a table representatives of the Shia in the south, the Kurds in the north, even the Sunni in the center of the country.

I think nearly 30 years of Saddam Hussein's rule will inspire in the Iraqi people a desire for a decent, humane government, and with help from us, I see no reason to assume (inaudible) that that can't be done. I think it can be done and I think the chances of success in that regard are infinitely greater than the likelihood that we will find the weapons of mass destruction that even a good inspection regime would be incompetent to unearth.

HUNTER: I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Saxton.

SAXTON: Mr. Perle, General Clark indicated a few minutes ago that he wasn't sure -- I'm sorry, I don't want to mischaracterize what General Clark said but something to the effect that we don't have information that Al Qaida and the Iraqi regime are connected. Is that a fair characterization, General Clark?

CLARK: I'm saying there hasn't been any substantiation of the linkage of the Iraqi regime to the events of 9/11 or the fact that they are giving weapons of mass destruction capability to Al Qaida, yes sir.

SAXTON: OK, now that has been a widely held view, at least in some quarters, and I suspect that one of the difficulties that we've had in addressing this subject comes because of the difficulty of collecting intelligence in that region of the world for all the reasons that we know.

However, yesterday the president's national security adviser began to talk about this subject in a different light. She said we clearly know that there were in the past and have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and member of Al Qaida going back for a long time. We know too that several of the Al Qaida detainees, in particular some high-ranking detainees have said that Iraq provided some training to Al Qaida in chemical weapons development.

Now I suspect that it would be difficult for someone to say that if they didn't have information to back it up and she also suggested that the details of the contacts would be released at a later to date and from my knowledge of intelligence work, which is sketchy, but from what I know it's difficult sometimes to disclose details because you endanger sources.

And so, I think this is a subject that certainly there are beginning to be indications that there are -- as a matter of fact, other bad guys have gone to Iraq. Abu Nidal died there recently, and when you couple all this with the notion that Saddam has been very determined to act out against his neighbors and the West and seems to stop at nothing, to draw the conclusion based on evidence that is beginning to emerge that there is no contact and no general theme of cooperation between Saddam and officials or the leadership of Al Qaida is a stretch, and I think a dangerous conclusion to come to. Richard Perle, would you give us your opinion?

PERLE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Saxton. I think you've identified an important issue and a serious problem. It is true that it is difficult to collect intelligence in these areas but the bigger problem in my view has been a stunning lack of competence among our own intelligence agencies. They've simply proved incompetent in this area and I've testified on this theme several times over the last ten or 15 years.

What we are now beginning to see is evidence that was there all along. It simply wasn't properly assessed, and the reason why it wasn't assessed in my view is that a point of view dominated the intelligence community, the CIA in particular and that point of view held that a secular Baathist regime like that of Saddam Hussein would not cooperate with religious fanatics like Al Qaida.

This was a theory. There was nothing to support it except the speculation of the intelligence officials who held that view, and as a result they simply didn't look for evidence that there might be a connection. Now that we are aware of the strange ways in which terrorists cooperate all over the world, we're beginning to find significant evidence.

There is no logical basis for the IRA cooperating with terrorists in Columbia and yet we've caught them red handed doing it. There's a kind of professional trade craft involved in which people engaged in the business of terrorism work with one another for mutual convenience, sometimes for exchanges of money and the like.

So there is, in fact, evidence of relations between Saddam and Al Qaida and I believe that the more intensively we scrutinize databases of information available to us in the past, the more evidence of that we're going to find.

CLARK: Representative Saxton, if I could just tag along on that. I think there's no question that, even though we may not have the evidence as Richard says, that there have been such contacts. It's normal. It's natural. These are a lot of bad actors in the same region together. They are going to bump into each other. They are going to exchange information. They're going to feel each other out and see whether there are opportunities to cooperate. That's inevitable in this region, and I think it's clear that regardless of whether or not such evidence is produced of these connections that Saddam Hussein is a threat.

So I think that, you know, the key issue is how we move from here and what do we need to do to deal with this threat? But I think what's also clear is that the way you deal with the threat from Iraq is different than the way you deal with the threat from Al Qaida. And so, my contention has been we need to look at different means for dealing with these threats. We need to take advantage of all the resources at our disposal, not just the military.

If I could say with respect to the inspections issue, as well as the comments of my friend and colleague Richard Perle, I'm not either optimistic or pessimistic. I practiced weapons inspection. I've been involved in diplomacy at the United Nations, and I've been involved in setting up the plans for a number of post conflict situations, including Bosnia, Haiti, and Kosovo, so I'm only giving you the best judgment from my own perspective. I don't label it. So, Richard, if I could just in a friendly way say if you won't label me, I won't label you.

PERLE: No, no. Wes, what I was labeling was the unavoidable conclusion that you think inspections can work, and I think the overwhelming evidence is that they can't.

CLARK: No, I've been very clear. I don't have any expectation ultimately that the inspections will work in the sense of finding and eliminating every weapons of mass destruction program. What I'm suggesting is that the inspections are useful in pursuing America's security concerns and we should be endeavoring to pursue those

concerns with every means at our disposal, one of which is inspections.

PERLE: Well, if I may say so, if the inspections fail to achieve their purpose, that is finding Saddam's weapons, then I think they are not only not helpful, they're quite damaging because the failure to find those weapons will make it very difficult to sustain the inspections regime itself beyond a certain point to keep sanctions in place and to take action that might actually be effective in removing those weapons of mass destruction.

SAXTON: Mr. Chairman, if I may just reclaim my time for 30 seconds, I would just...

HUNTER: Mr. Saxton, do you want back into this conversation? Go right ahead.

SAXTON: I just wanted to thank General Clark for clarifying his position. I thought you had said there had been no contacts and now you do know as we do that there have been contacts between Saddam and Al Qaida and so thank you for clarifying that.

CLARK: I'm expecting it. I'd say no substantiation of it. It has to be going on. It has to be.

SAXTON: Well, thank you. I'm glad that you and Condoleezza Rice are on the same track. I was worried there for a while. But, General Clark, maybe you could just respond to the last point in your interchange, which as I understand was if we find -- if the inspectors find a bunch of empty rooms, are shown a bunch of empty rooms in this next inspection regime, how does that rally the world then to the United States' goal of disarming Iraq?

CLARK: Well, I think this goes into the design and the development of the inspections program itself, and as I indicated earlier, I have not sketched this out in great detail. I could present something in writing to the committee if you'd like, but there can be an inspection program set up which is echeloned in the sense of starting narrow and going broader and broader and more intrusive until the concerns of the state which bring forward this requirement, i.e. the United States, are satisfied, and in the process we're either going to push this far enough that we gain some other ins or we're going to hit a red line in which we'll get the trigger. But what I want to also make clear is that the difference I think between what Richard was saying...

SAXTON: But maybe you could explain how you get the trigger if they absorb us and they allow enough inspections to find empty rooms but nothing else, and at that point you want to see a galvanized world community behind the United States. Why would they galvanize behind an America which has gotten inspections, been absorbed by Iraq, and found nothing?

CLARK: Well first of all, I think we need to look very carefully at the composition of the inspection team, its authorities, and the information sources it uses. That's why I say it's echeloned. It may start narrow and go broader. Secondly, I think that the experience of the inspection team is as they begin to work they do find some levels of information and as we put people in there more and more on the ground, they will eventually find things.

But I think the fundamental question is this, is the purpose of the inspection team, is

the value of it only in finding the weapons of mass destruction, or does it not also have value in impeding Saddam's weapons of mass destruction program, undercutting his authority, providing warning, establishing a trigger, and I think it has these broader impacts.

And so, I think we should not be driven by excessive fear at this point that the inspections may come up dry from trying to work an inspection program that meets the broader purposes that serve the United States and our goals.

SAXTON: The stated goal is none of the above. It's to disarm Iraq, at least according to the administration.

CLARK: And this is one of the difficulties. We're in open session and I don't mean to be anything other than direct and straightforward but I think we know that programs like inspections have consequences that are beyond their stated purpose and certainly Saddam Hussein recognizes this and this is why he didn't want the inspectors there, not that he couldn't fool them, but he couldn't be sure he could fool them all the time with enough energy left over to pursue his aims and still do everything else.

So, even though the inspections may have been not full usefulness in terms of stopping his program, they provided other benefits and we should pursue those benefits within the time available as a way of building legitimacy for the United States and our concerns.

HUNTER: Mr. Allen.

ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you both for being here. We've had a lot of conversation about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program and where we're going. I'm concerned about what we're doing right now as a country and I wanted to focus on a couple things.

If our goal is to win allies for dealing with Saddam Hussein, both here at home and abroad, it seems to me we've made some mistakes, and let me call attention to a couple of things. First of all, it seems to me that we can deal with Iraq without making into doctrines applicable to other countries and other times the, you know, whatever it is we plan to do here.

Example number one, regime change, it hasn't been enough for this administration to say we need to replace Saddam Hussein. We have to create a doctrine of regime change that for what are now called, the phrases keep changing, but they're not called terrorist states, we have the right to change those regimes.

The second component is preemptive strikes. It's not enough to deal with the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, which is real. It may not be immediate but it's not that far in the future. It's very serious. But instead we have a new doctrine put down on paper that allows, that says we claim the right to strike preemptively at other countries.

We've developed a theory; I think the administration has a theory of unilateralism as a fundamental approach to the world. All of this, I can tell you back home just in my district, creates unnecessary anxiety and hostility to what the administration is trying to do and that is nothing compared to the reaction overseas.

And, I think that the question you pose, General Clark, about how do we move from here in a way that takes account not just of the military challenges but the political challenges is important. I want to begin with Mr. Perle and then have you respond too. Mr. Perle on September 10th, there was an article in The Boston Globe and basically there was the suggestion that some of the, you know, we're used the hawks and the doves kind of language now.

But there was the suggestion in the piece that according to the hawks in the administration, Iraq is just the first piece of the puzzle, and I quote: "After an ouster of Hussein they say the United States will have more leverage to act against Syria and Iran, will be in a better position to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and will be able to rely less on Saudi oil." And then there was another comment in here that among the more extreme version here was the view elaborated in a briefing in July by a Rand Corporation researcher to the Defense Policy Board, which you chair, Mr. Perle.

That briefing urged the United States to deliver an ultimatum to the Saudi government to cut its ties to militant Islam or risk seizure of its oil fields and overseas assets. It called Iraq "The Tactical Pivot," and Saudi Arabia "The Strategic Pivot."

So, my question to you, Mr. Perle first, is if you could kind of both on the doctrines of preemption and regime change and then on the briefing that either you or your policy board heard, and with respect to that component, I'd really be interested in whether you think that kind of threat against Saudi Arabia is the way the administration ought to move, and then I'd just like General Clark to respond. Thank you.

PERLE: Well, thank you, Mr. Allen.

First, on the question of doctrines, I think we sometimes do ourselves a disservice by discussing in doctrinal terms the specifics of the situation that may be unique, and indeed in these matters there are almost never two situations that are exactly alike. So, I'm not in favor of developing a doctrine of regime change. I am in favor of removing Saddam Hussein from power, and I can imagine others posing a similar threat where one would also wish to see them removed but I don't think a doctrine is necessarily helpful and I agree with you on that.

With respect to preemptive strike, again I don't think it makes much sense to develop this into a doctrine, although I think it is important to point out that waiting until one is struck first is not always the best way to protect ourselves, and in this instance I happen to think that idea applies. And as for the theory of unilateralism, I haven't heard that advocated as such. I've never known any official of this or any other administration that would not much prefer to have broad support internationally for anything that we attempt to do.

What I think is at issue here is the question of how prepared we should be to act alone when, for whatever reason, we are unable to gather the support of other countries, and I think what you're seeing here is a reaction to some years in the previous administration where there was a great emphasis placed on multilateral activity on negotiating multilateral agreements and acting in a multilateral context.

And I think there's a sense that we went too far in that direction and maybe we need to assert the particularism that is appropriate for a country that is unique and perhaps uniquely a target, and therefore is bound to differ from time to time with other countries, but I certainly share your view that we shouldn't make things more difficult for ourselves by elevating specific contingencies to broad general principles.

With respect to the briefing on Saudi Arabia, let me say first that the Defense Policy Board is an unusual institution. It is a group of people who come together from time to time, receive briefings, discuss the contents of those briefings, and eventually discuss their reflections with the secretary of defense. This usually takes place over two days.

We have encouraged a very broad approach in the sense that we want all points of view and there's no censorship. Nobody asks the briefer beforehand what he's going to say. An expert who is working hard to understand the complex issue that the board is trying to understand may well be invited to come and present to us and that particular briefing was a very interesting briefing.

It was not as portrayed in the press. Whoever thought it was a good idea to turn over the slides from that briefing and the speaker's notes, I think was probably not present when the briefing was given and therefore assumed that everything in the speaking notes was said in the meeting. That isn't the case and some of the more inflammatory quotations from the speaker's notes were, in fact, never presented.

Different members of the board had different reactions to that briefing but I don't know anyone who stood up and said now we have found an appropriate policy for dealing with Saudi Arabia, but it was a provocative briefing and produced an interesting discussion among members of the board.

My own view is that we are quite right to say to the Saudi government, the substantial amounts of money that you have been distributing through extremist organizations is producing around the world a number of people, often young people, who are being driven to hatred of the United States and the West in general, and they pose a threat to us.

They are the breeding ground for the recruitment of Al Qaida and other terrorists and we would be very grateful if you would stop that. We would not foment that sort of attitude against you and we would be grateful if you wouldn't foment it against us.

In my view, we can deal with the Saudi government, to government to government. We have a mixed relationship with them. There are some positive elements. This is a negative element and I think we ought to be discussing it with them and not threatening them in the way that it was wrongly reported that briefing propose that we do.

CLARK: I think your question about doctrine are very important questions but as you observe and I agree, there's no requirement to have any doctrine here. I mean this is simply a longstanding right of the United States and other nations to take the actions they deem necessary in their self defense. Every president has deployed forces as necessary to take action. He's done so without multilateral support if necessary. He's done so in advance of conflict if necessary.

In my experience, I was the commander of the European forces in NATO. When we

took action in Kosovo, we did not have United Nations approval to do this and we did so in a way that was designed to preempt Serb ethnic cleansing and regional destabilization there. There were some people who didn't agree with that decision. The United Nations was not able to agree to support it with a resolution.

Nevertheless, we did go to the United Nations, and as Ambassador Holbrooke so well explained in an op-ed piece I think three weeks ago, going to the United Nations was a very important part of building legitimacy for the action that we ultimately had to take. But the responsibility to deploy force is ultimately the responsibility for the United States and its leaders alone, for no one else.

So, I think in this case that the doctrine of preemption and regime change had been actually counterproductive in trying to make the case against Saddam Hussein because they tend to be misinterpreted. We've always talked within the military circles about the possibility of preemption. We've always worried about it. We worried about how you get the specific information you needed. We worried about whether the action could be effective or not.

We worried about what the consequences of that would be, but it was discussed behind closed doors in a number of cases, I'm sure, and nevertheless we never felt a reason to publish a doctrine on it because the doctrine itself becomes a fact and an element in international relations.

We saw the headlines in The Washington Post a few days ago that said the United States replaces deterrence with domination, and I immediately began to get phone calls from European journalists who say what is this American domination? This is what we've been worried about. And so, in that sense, I think we're much better off if we'll focus on the problem at hand, which is the war against Al Qaida and the problem of Iraq itself and deal with those as specific problems, which we must deal with.

With respect to the case of Saudi Arabia and a strategy in the area, I think it is very important that we have a strategy in this region and one of the things that is perplexing is that we've not seen an articulation of the strategy other than the occasional linkages like The Boston Globe article that you gave reference to, so we don't really know if there is a strategy or what we're specifically pointing to.

CLARK: I would simply observe that in 1973, a few years after you and I were out of college, I was in the Pentagon for a summer as an intern and I wrote a paper on the possibility of someday deploying U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf and I was warned by an old colonel at the time. He said: "Captain, if you write a paper like that, that Senator Fulbright is going to have you over testifying before the Congress and us too and we're all going to get fired," and there were no U.S. forces in that region in 1973.

Since then, we've encouraged Saddam Hussein and supported him as he attacked against Iran in an effort to prevent Iranian destabilization of the Gulf. That came back and bit us when Saddam Hussein then moved against Kuwait. We encouraged the Saudis and the Pakistanis to work with the Afghans and build an army of God, the mujahaddin, to oppose the Soviets in Afghanistan. Now we have released tens of thousands of these Holy warriors, some of whom have turned against us and formed Al Qaida.

My French friends constantly remind me that these are problems that we had a hand in creating. So when it comes to creating another strategy, which is built around the intrusion into the region by U.S. forces, all the warning signs should be flashing. There are unintended consequences when force is used. Use it as a last resort. Use it multilaterally if you can. Use it unilaterally only if you must.

ALLEN: Thank you.

HUNTER: Thank the gentleman. Mr. Thornberry.

THORNBERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Clark, it seems to me the crux of the judgments you make is that time is on our side in the near term. I mean that's really a bottom line, and with a calculated risk.

You went through the six-month and so you're willing, I guess, to take the risk that time in the short term may not be on our side in exchange for the benefit that comes from having more international support. I guess my bottom line question is, how long would you mess around with that? How long is time on -- what is the near term during which time is on our side?

CLARK: This is a very important question, Congressman, and there's not a black and white answer to it. It depends on our sense of momentum and the progress that we're making. There are two contending forces at work here. One is that the longer we take and the more momentum we build and the greater coalition we build, the greater the likelihood that this Saddam regime and his repression will disintegrate either at the first tap or even before we use force, simply because the will and determination of his subordinates can be eroded, so in that sense, the slower inevitable buildup works against him and works in our favor.

On the other hand, the more certain he is that we're likely to use force against him and seize no alternative, then the more likely it is that he's going to seek a means of deterrence and defense against us. So if he wasn't working with Al Qaida before, if he can find anyone left in Al Qaida to work with, he may well be talking to them right now. He may well be trying to figure out how to use what capabilities he has against us and this will become particularly urgent as we build up forces in the region because as those forces go into the region, then we're going to have to be very aware of the fact that Saddam is somewhat unpredictable and he may well decide to try to strike first against them or someone else.

So it's a tradeoff. It's something that's going to be evaluated on a week-by-week, day-by-day basis by the administration, our military, and political leaders, and I think the only thing you can say right now is that from this perspective, from the information that I have at hand, that the balance comes down on taking the time now in the next days and weeks before the forces get there to try to build the international coalition. The situation may look different in December or January.

THORNBERRY: Mr. Perle, if you want to comment on that, that would be great but I want to ask you to comment on another issue. We have heard from a number of witnesses. One of them described this week that the biggest foreign policy problem we're going to have in the future is managing resentment and so the argument that if we go in generally on our own, that we will so inflame people all around the world

to hate us that much more, that the ranks of Al Qaida and other terrorist groups are going to grow and so we are creating a bigger problem in a way than we are solving.

You know one of the answers in the literature is that well actually what people respect more is force and so it's the weakness that encourages the sort of attacks against us. Can you give us your perspective on this argument about how acting in Iraq will inflame others to attack us and build this resentment which is in a way a bigger problem over the long run it is argued.

PERLE: I think a great deal depends on what happens in Iraq and how the American action and the American motives are perceived. If we were to go into Iraq, conquer it, seize its resources, appropriate them for ourselves and suppress a hostile population, I think that could certainly build resentment. I don't know anyone who's proposing that we do that.

What I would like to see us do is go into Iraq together with the opponents of Saddam Hussein's regime, liberate the people of Iraq from the scourge of that nightmare regime, assist the Iraqis in developing a decent and humane government, make sure that their resources are devoted to the rebuilding of that country.

And I think under those circumstances the world will see that the United States has acted not simply in its own behalf but to the benefit of the people of Iraq, and I have no doubt that once Iraq is liberated we will learn what a brutal, brutal without precedent regime, the regime of Saddam Hussein has been. We will hear the stories from the survivors, from the sons and daughters and sisters and brothers and mothers and fathers about the murders, about the surgical mutilation of people who have crossed Saddam Hussein, about the use of rape as an instrument of policy and the like.

And, I think in those circumstances things will change. We faced this when we went into Granada in the Reagan administration and as it happens the American forces were treated as liberators in Granada. We saw much of the same thing in Afghanistan, which is a more complicated situation, but a great many people were relieved to see the end of the Taliban regime. So, I think everything depends on our purpose and our steadiness of purpose and on the way in which that action is received by the people who are affected by it most directly.

HUNTER: Mr. Snyder.

SNYDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you gentlemen for being here. Mr. Perle if you don't mind, I'm going to direct my questions to General Clark since he's one of my constituents and I feel some obligation to report to his wonderful wife, Gert, how he does here today. I'm sure he'll feel an obligation to do the same with me.

General, if you don't mind, I'm going to just summarize kind of where my thinking is on this and you and I have talked privately before and I have found that the most, I guess visceral issue of my six years here in terms of its potential impact not only on a lot of people's lives but on our foreign policy.

And, a lot of what you've written and spoken about has shaped my thinking because you talk about military forces being the last resort. In fact, you had a London Times piece at the end of August "Why War Should be America's Last Resort," which is

another way of saying we have got to exhaust diplomatic resources before we pursue the war.

I have looked on it as a way of saying a balancing of risk, comparing the risks now versus what risk we might incur by going ahead with a particularly unilateral military action against Iraq. As I look at the reasons that people have outlined for why we should move ahead even if we have to move ahead alone, we heard the term drain the swamp, meaning drain the swamp of terrorists after September 11.

General Boyd had the comment in The New York Times of last week that he talks about if it we go alone the near certainty of creating legions of new terrorists and I'm not a military historian. I don't know what a legion is but I think it means a lot of people and yet we look at how much energy was put into finding one small cell we think in New York and yet we're talking about potentially creating legions.

In your London Times piece you also say: "Attacking Iraq will detract from our primary mission against Al Qaida, supercharging anti- American sentiment in the Arab street, boosting Al Qaida's recruiting and causing difficulty for modern Arab regimes." You go on to say: "Our overriding priority must be to bring greater international resolve and cooperation into the war on Al Qaida to cut their support from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere and to harmonize intelligence sharing and law enforcement in Europe and North America. This will take months and years of sustained effort."

The president's is quoted today in the Post as saying: "In the war on terror, you can't distinguish between Al Qaida and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror. They're both equally as bad and equally as evil and equally as destructive." I think I agree on the degree of evilness, but in terms of the prioritization I've come down on your side that the priority ought to be Al Qaida.

The other arguments we've heard that this is a guy who has attacked his own neighbors and yet, as you have discussed, one potential sequel of a unilateral attack would be to motivate him to attack Israel. We have heard the argument he has attacked his own people, which has been unfortunately terribly true, but a military attack if it's not absolutely necessary may unnecessarily motivate him to attack the Kurds and avoid a Northern Alliance type situation that occurred in Afghanistan.

And then, of course, our overriding goal and the overriding goal of every American is to protect Americans and reduce the risks of damage of harm to America. I've been meeting with, you know, retired military people and this is not from any classified briefing but just I throw out a term. Well, if things don't go quite as smoothly as we think, could we incur as many as 10,000 U.S. casualties? And I get the head nod, yes that could happen, as General Boyd said congregated in the staging area and a chemical weapons attack.

And then, I've heard terms of numbers of 70,000 to 80,000 to 100,000 troops that may have -- U.S. that may have to be stationed in Iraq for up to ten years. I would think it high risk at some point after being there for that length of time. And then, your comment about time, you very clearly stated we can not postpone indefinitely, but on the other hand, that in the near term time is on our side.

That's what comes down to me or why it comes down to me is that if time is on our side in this range in the near term as Mac was asking about, this should be the time

when we exhaust the diplomatic efforts and be sure that we don't incur the risks of going to war before we have done everything we can to avoid them.

And one other factor in this in my thinking is to me the number one strategic priority in the Middle East is dealing with Israel and Palestine, and you know I've had a conversation with Condoleezza Rice I think in the second, third month of the administration, you know, please be more involved in this.

I think now if we had all these resources, and even the potential commitment of troops to enforce an Israeli-Palestinian agreement, what that might do and how it might change. And if we avoid going to war for six months or one year or 18 months, who knows what may happen for the good. There certainly could be things for the bad but that boy may drop dead. I mean we just don't know what may happen.

The one question I want to ask from your written statement, you have -- there's been a lot of effort put in on the resolution and the language. You state this one sentence: "The resolution need not at this point authorize the use of force but simply agree on the intent to authorize the use of force if other measures fail" and this to me is a key question because you know I want our president to feel like he's got all the support of the American people he needs to work this out dealing with the international community.

But, I'm not I don't think willing to vote at this time to say and here you've got my card to go to war six months, eight months down the line if in your mind it hasn't worked out well. I think that's a decision the American people want the Congress to make. What do you mean by that language?

CLARK: I think that what you have to do is first, the card has been laid on the table about the intent of the United States to take unilateral action, so we've moved past the point we were at in mid- August when there was a discussion and the president was saying he hadn't made up his mind what to do and so forth.

So the president, our commander-in-chief, has committed himself. I think it's wise to narrow the resolution that was submitted. I think it will be more effective and more useful and I think it's more in keeping with the checks and balances that are the hallmark of the American government if that resolution is narrowed.

And on the other hand, I think you have to narrow it in such a way that you don't remove the resort to force as a last option consideration in this case. So, not giving a blank check but expressing an intent to sign the check when all other alternatives are exhausted. I think in dealing with men like Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein that diplomacy has to be leveraged by discussions the threat, or in the last instance, the use of force.

I think it's not time yet to use force against Iraq but it is certainly time to put that card on the table, to turn it face up and to wave it and the president is doing that and I think that the United States Congress has to indicate after due consideration and consulting our people and building our resolve that yes, this is a significant security problem for the United States of America and all options are on the table including the use of force as necessary to solve this problem because I think that's what's required to leverage any hope of solving this problem short of war.

SNYDER: Thank you.

HUNTER: Thank the gentleman. Mr. Schrock.

SCHROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Obviously, General, your time is on our side comment has certainly generated a lot of interest.

HUNTER: And I might mention, Mr. Schrock, we're going to try to keep this hearing going because General Clark has to leave at what time General, 11:30?

CLARK: 11:30, 20 until 12:00. It's really hard to get out of here, Mr. Chairman. This is a very interesting area.

HUNTER: Mr. Perle says it's hard to get in. Okay, go ahead Mr. Schrock.

SCHROCK: To my knowledge, you're the first person I've heard in the hearings that I've attended that says that time is on our side but then I heard you say a little bit later the clock is ticking, which means less and less time is on our side as we go along and I'm still trying to understand what elements in this situation would indicate that time is on our side and, of course, I'd like to hear Mr. Perle's comment on it as well.

And a second subject is what should we do if the regime suddenly collapses? You know what should that scenario include? In any good military plan you have an exit in and an exit out, and the exit out is probably more important than the exit in because we probably know what the exit in is going to be.

I, too, am concerned the absence of intelligence created the situation last year that nobody ever thought would occur and I worry about the inspections. I just don't understand how new inspections would be any different than the past ones we've had.

He's deceived us all along and I think he's had several years now to develop capabilities of putting things underground or putting them on wheels and moving them around so he could do whatever he wanted, and if inspections will not work, then are we -- it's less time on our side that we could have been taking action against this guy.

And I agree with you, deterrence not domination. I don't want that and use force as a last resort. What is that drop dead date or time certain when that occurs? I'm just baffled by a lot of that. I threw a lot at you. I don't know if you can sort through that.

CLARK: Well, if I could answer and talk about why time is on our side in the near term, first because we have the preponderance of force in this region. There's no question what the outcome of a conflict would be. Saddam Hussein so far as we know does not have nuclear weapons. Even if there was a catastrophic breakdown in the sanctions regime and somehow he got nuclear materials right now, he wouldn't have nuclear weapons in any zable quantity for, at best, a year, maybe two years.

Yes, he has chemical and biological weapons. He's had those for a long time. But the United States right now is on a very much different defensive posture than we were

before September 11th of 2001, so people are alert here. Our homeland security is certainly not perfect but we've, I think, taken some very significant steps. We're much more observant than we have been before.

So, we have the time to build up the force, work the diplomacy, achieve the leverage before he can come up with any military alternative that's significant enough ultimately to block us, and so that's why I say time is on our side in the near term. In the long term, no, and we don't know what the long term is. Maybe it's five years. Maybe it's four years. Maybe it's eight years. We don't know.

We know the situation can't be permitted and beyond that, we don't want to live in a world where the United Nations is increasingly enfeebled. This is an important opportunity that the president has seized to strengthen the United Nations.

But to strengthen it, we've got to have the patience to work with it and we've got to twist some arms and bend some elbows and do all the kinds of things in international politics that I guess domestic political leaders do in their home constituencies and in their races. I mean this is about leadership. It's not just about a threat. So that's why I say time is on our side.

Your second question was about the exit strategy and what I've tried to portray is if you're going to have an exit strategy, you're going to have a turnover you have to anticipate some of the worst things that might happen. You hope they won't happen and they may not. It may be just as Richard Perle has suggested maybe a lay down. This thing may turn out -- they do have an educated population. They're one of the most western-oriented countries in the region. There's also been a lot of psychological trauma inflicted on them so you don't know but you have to prepare for the worst.

I hope that we're starting to do that in a very, very serious way but there are a number of steps that have to be taken first, like engaging international organizations and the U.N. and trying to build a framework because we don't want to put the United States armed forces if it takes I don't know how many, 50,000, 70,000 initially.

We don't want a bunch of young men in battle dress uniforms out there indefinitely trying to perform humanitarian assistance. That's not our job. We're not very good at it. We're also not any good at police work. Now we're doing a lot of it in place like Kosovo and Bosnia and we have and it's been unfortunate. So we should try to do better in this case.

HUNTER: Let me tell the gentleman we have one minute left on this vote. I think they're going to hold it for a little bit but I'm inclined, if you want to pursue the last of this question, the chair is going to run over and make this vote. I'm going to come back in five minutes.

SCHROCK: So am I.

HUNTER: So, Ed will be back too so let's take a five, ten-minute break. We'll be right back and Ms. Davis too, excuse me.

(RECESS)

HUNTER: OK, folks, we'll resume here and we may get a few more members back in a couple of minutes.

SCHROCK (?): I had one more question. It was about new inspections.

HUNTER: Yes.

CLARK: Can I answer, Mr. Chairman.

HUNTER: Sure.

CLARK: For the record.

HUNTER: Absolutely.

CLARK: From the gentleman who asked me the question, the third part of it when we broke was about why do the inspections and what if they don't work. I think the answer is that we have to set up an inspection regime and that's what should be going on here in the course of the discussions at the United Nations, which has enough tripwires and bells and whistles on it that we can intensify it to accomplish our broader purposes, even if the inspection comes up dry and maybe it will find something.

And as one person reminded me at the break, if you find one warhead and one weapon you've accomplished something more and taken one more asset away from him that could be used against us or our friends. So I think that we do have time and we should use that time to promote and exhaust all of the non force of arms remedies.

SCHROCK (?): Well, let me just follow up on that question, General. If you thought that the -- if you had evidence that Saddam Hussein was going to have a nuclear device in four months, would you recommend taking American action to destroy that capability?

CLARK: Yes, I would.

SCHROCK: How do you know that you don't have four months?

CLARK: You don't.

SCHROCK: Then how can you say with any certainty that time is on your side?

CLARK: You can say that in the near term, based on the information available that we should exhaust all diplomatic means because you don't have the hard information.

SCHROCK: But wait a second.

CLARK: If he has a single nuclear device...

SCHROCK: But my point is, my question to you, let me get back to the question. You said and you went through all of the different estimates as to when he's going to have one. You also concur, I take it, with the fact that when we went in in '91 our

projection was that he was three to five years away and we found out he was six months away so we were wrong, weren't we that time?

CLARK: You know, I've never seen all of the details on which that projection was based. I think it assumed that if he had fissionable material he could have a crude nuclear device, not a nuclear weapon but something like a dirty bomb in six months.

SCHROCK: OK, but I would hope you would accept the facts that have come before this committee over the last numerous hearings that that's what basically is stated in open testimony that we said it was three to five years and, in fact, it was six months is accurate and that's what we do know because we went in and we found and we did deprive him then of his facilities or some of his facilities when we went in.

Now if that's so, and you have said there are estimates all over the lot and nobody is sure what he has, how can you then say that you know? You didn't say it may be that time is on our side. You said time is on our side. How do you know, how can you say with certainty time is on your side if the basic facts underlying that statement are, in your words, uncertain?

CLARK: Well, I don't want to answer this in an epistemological sense. I want to answer it just in the sense of practical statesmanship.

SCHROCK: That's the way I'm trying to ask it.

CLARK: I think you have to balance risks and I think that in balancing the risks it's better to take the time now to line up as strong as possible diplomatic support and a military coalition before you have to take what looks like will probably be inevitable action, rather than rushing into something on the presumption that your intelligence is faulty and you don't have the time to prepare it because in the last course.

If we had the information that you're suggesting that he was going to have a nuclear device, presumably we'd have some idea of where it was and we have the means to strike Saddam Hussein literally on a moment's notice today. We could do so if we were under threat. We should take the time. It's a matter of practical statesmanship.

SCHROCK: Well, but the evidence that we had then after we went in was that he was six months away. The proposals that were made by Senator Nunn and others that we embark on a long-range sanctions program would certainly have fallen outside because they were programs that would go on for years presumably, would certainly have fallen outside that six-month period. So in retrospect was that then not a mistake or would that not have been a mistake to have waited for several years at that point?

CLARK: I think these are -- I understand what you're asking. These are hypothetical.

SCHROCK: Valuable questions.

CLARK: I think you know with the value of hindsight what you realize is that there are many, you know, ifs, would-haves, and buts in situations like this. The question before the United States of America is whether we think our intelligence system is so faulty and our lack of information so gross that we would feel the need to rush to a military solution before we've taken the time to adequately build up the diplomatic and full military support capabilities that will assure we get a more favorable

outcome. And, you know, it's a question of where the weight of the evidence is.

I no longer have access to the information this committee has. You may have information I have not seen, but based on the evidence submitted publicly and my experience over many years of looking at classified information, I would say the balance comes down on time is on our side in the near term. We don't know precisely how long that is and we don't know exactly where we'll draw the line on that risk.

As long as we're achieving momentum in building support for our case and building legitimacy, as long as we have with all of the sensors and all of the intelligence capabilities of the United States focused on Iraq and we have no specific indicators of any breakthrough, linkage, or sudden development then press on. Time is on our side in a practical sense.

HUNTER: Mr. Perle.

CLARK: Mr. Chairman, with your permission sir, I hate to do this but I have to depart. I've got to get a plane at Reagan Airport to make previous commitments that I can't get out of. I bet your indulgence.

HUNTER: Well, the gentleman, you've stuck around for a long time and it is sometimes hard to get out of the city and feel free to leave and Mr. Perle you may want to answer that particular question. I'll tell you what. Before you take off here, General, just one other question for you. You said that we don't want to recruit a bunch of new Al Qaida members by doing something that disturbs the extremist world. Our last military operations have been ones in which we saved Muslims by the hundreds of thousands into millions.

CLARK: Right.

HUNTER: Whether it's Kuwait or Kosovo and yet we seem to have had an attack on the United States by some extremists. How would you explain that? What else do you think we could have done in terms of opening our arms, in fact shedding our blood, for components of the Muslim world that we didn't do?

CLARK: Well, I think it takes a number of measures but beyond all of the major operations that we undertook on their behalf..

HUNTER: How much more do you think we need to do?

CLARK: I think we did a great job taking care of Muslims but we weren't taking care of them because they were Muslims. We were taking care of them because it was right to do so and we could make a difference (inaudible).

HUNTER: That's not my point. The fact is we did and yet we have seemed to have had a rather dramatic attack on the United States that certainly in your world where we build up this rapport and we do good things for the Muslim world which hopefully we would do and we gain their trust and respect by waiting on Saddam Hussein. We've done remarkable things, real things, things of substance, not words but deeds and yet we had an attack on the United States. Where were we lacking? How much more did we need to give that we didn't give?

CLARK: I think we didn't fully appreciate the danger of Al Qaida and you know I start from the 11th of September and work backwards -- of 2001 and work backwards and say not only the intelligence communities but, you know, in the military as you well know, we have a tendency to look up the chain of command and down the chain of command and we work it from top to bottom and we do an after action review after every operation. We ask what happened, why did it happen and how can we fix it? That after action review, sir, has not been done and those who were accountable have not been held accountable.

SCHROCK: Now, and you also think that we should always think things out very clearly before we do them, now that would apply hopefully to inspections as well as military operations.

You've never yet really fully answered this question. If the inspection regime is a product of a commission, a committee, a group, some members of which are not totally pro-American and don't believe that our intention of divesting Saddam Hussein of weapons of mass destruction is totally their goal, and we have an inspection regime which ends up with our people looking at a bunch of empty rooms, how does that allow us to take the next step, and you're a person who thinks we should always look at the next step, of galvanizing world opinion as we stand in the empty room and we say now will the world be on our side in taking military action, how do we do that?

CLARK: I think the first thing is you have a very strong determination that's out in public and supported by this body that says if we don't get the assistance we need from the United Nations, as a last resort we will use force and we will solve this problem ourselves.

HUNTER: So if the United Nations doesn't give us a strong aggressive inspection regime, we should reject a weaker inspection regime and take military action?

CLARK: I'm not suggesting that.

HUNTER: OK, now what if they give us a weaker -- I think we can --

CLARK: You're leading the witness, sir.

HUNTER: I know but this is a question that has to be answered.

CLARK: Sir --

HUNTER: We know that the United Nations is not inclined to give us the kind of a rigorous enforced by armed troops inspection regime that all of our experts tell us you have to have to have a real inspection of Iraq.

CLARK: We have to build up the leverage that our diplomats need. We have one of the greatest secretaries of state we've ever had, General Colin Powell up there. We've got to give him the backing he needs, the leverage he needs and the president's got to have what he needs to make it very clear what the consequences for the United Nations and our allies are if we don't move ahead, and then we got to roll up our sleeves and we got to do the dirty work and it's difficult work. It's hard work. It's work that lots of people find very cumbersome. We've got to deal with our allies. We've got to persuade them.

HUNTER: And what if they a mild inspection regime similar to the last one that turned up a lot of empty rooms and smiling Iraqi bureaucrats, would you then say we take military action?

CLARK: I would say it would depend on whether we've exhausted all other possibilities and it's difficult. I don't want to draw a line and say, you know, this kind of inspection, if it's 100 inspectors that's enough. I think we've got to have done everything we can do given the time that's available to us before we ask the men and women in uniform, whom you know so well (inaudible).

HUNTER: You've been over the generalities but you got to get down to the details. As I understand it, your position is if you analyzed this and looked at the requirement in terms of people, thoroughness, and backing by force of a real inspection of Iraq and the United Nations did not give that to us, you would then rather than acquiesce to something that was a strategy for defeat, you would then take military action or you would not?

CLARK: Well, as I said, I don't think you can achieve a diplomatic resolution to this without the ultimate -- without putting force on the table as the last resort and it's got to be really on the table, and I think you know I feel very comfortable. I think I have proved to this body that I'm willing to use -- personally that I've been able when the time comes to pull the trigger, to pull the trigger. So you don't put that option on the table unless you really mean it. I personally really mean that you got to exhaust all the options first. You're giving me a hypothetical and I can't answer (inaudible).

HUNTER: Well, I'm giving you a real scenario that's probably going to be voted on in the United Nations at some point which is what is the size and makeup and what is the standard for the inspection team, and we all know, and you know and I know that we're going to have people in the United Nations who are going to vote to have a much weaker standard than we want, and we probably know that we're going to get a watered down inspection.

And so, we're going to have, since you're the guy that says you got to think through everything, I'm asking you let's think it through. You get the watered down inspection and you know it's going to end up with us being in a lot of empty rooms in Iraq with smiling Iraqi bureaucrats, would you then go for force?

CLARK: I would go for force if that's the last resort and there's no other way to do it and we've done everything we can do to strengthen the case of the United States in terms of its appearance in a world body.

HUNTER: Let's assume we've done that.

CLARK: OK, then we are assuming we've done everything by your definition and by my definition and there's no other option but the use of force, yes we're going to use force because this is a national security problem affecting the welfare of the American people. But, if we're going to use force effectively, we've got to convey to the American people and hopefully to people all over the world why this is a problem.

And, Mr. Chairman, if I could just say in conclusion I've been all over this country in the last month talking to people and nobody wants war and most people don't

understand this problem. I think I do understand it because I've lived with it for a decade. Most people don't and they say they don't see the connection between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaida. They are worried about what the consequences will be and they do feel the United States is -- somehow we've accelerated the tempo here and we've left our public behind.

That's why hearings like this and this public dialog is so very important. We've got to have the support. Having that resolution from the American people and this body is one of the strongest reinforcements we can give to our president and our diplomats in New York to get the resolution we need.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HUNTER: Thank you, General, and thank you for your testimony, and have a good, safe flight.

Oh, Susan Davis has waited here for a long time. General, I know you've got to take off, but can Susan have a shot at you before you leave?

Susan, go ahead.

DAVIS: Thank you very much for staying. And quickly, I think you mentioned preemption, but I wonder if you and certainly Mr. Perle as well, just the issue of perception and whether or not this in the minds of some would be setting some precedents perhaps, some dangerous precedents, India, Pakistan, what message does this send?

CLARK: I think that as a doctrine, it's a very difficult doctrine. It's probably a flawed doctrine as expressed doctrinally and unfortunately it's out there in public. I heard the West Point speech. I was concerned when I heard the speech. We've talked about this for years behind closed doors. We've always imagined gee we might send a hit team in to take out a chemical weapons factory.

Suddenly, preemption becomes taking out a government and going to regime change. It's a hugely different concept. Now it's more like preventive war and the notion of starting a war to prevent one is a very difficult notion to sign up to in the abstract so you really have to see the particulars and when you put it out there in the abstract as this sort of operating principle, it is subject to misinterpretation, misunderstanding, and replication by other states and it's not in our interest for them to do that. So I am concerned about this doctrine.

Nevertheless, I'll tell you that having read the doctrine itself or bits and pieces of it, there is much of it in there that's very standard and very much in line with what we've always done. But we're dealing here with the problem of perceptions and leadership. This is a country with global responsibilities. People look to us all over the world to set the standard, not only to be the strongest country, but to adhere to international law and support the institutions that we created in our own image.

And so I think when we, as my colleague said, there was some feeling over the last decade that somehow we'd given away too much to multinational institutions. Personally I don't think that feeling was justified. I think there was a misunderstanding and it wasn't communicated correctly. But whatever it is, we built those multinational institutions for our own selfish American interests.

In 1945, President Truman said when he opened the United Nations, we have to change from our aggressor's motto, our enemy's motto of might makes right and us the United Nations so that right makes might. But to work in those institutions it's not them, it's us. We're in there. We're part of that institution and we have to lead it. We have a unique opportunity in post-Cold War world to do so. We have a unique opportunity on this issue to do so, and I regret the fact there have been some perceptions out there which have undercut our ability to do it but I hope that on this issue that with General Powell up there and many others that we will achieve the leadership we seek.

DAVIS: Do you think that...

HUNTER: And I hate to cut the gentle lady off but I've been reminded by Mr. Snyder that the General's going to miss his plane.

DAVIS: OK, I don't want to hold him up. Mr. Perle, could you respond. Is that a concern to you?

HUNTER: General, I know Ike Skelton wants to say goodbye.

SKELTON: I just want to say thanks very, very much.

HUNTER: He'll respond to you, Susan.

SKELTON: Catch your plane. Thank you.

CLARK: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you.

DAVIS: Thank you, General.

HUNTER: And we can have some staff folks help, make sure the general gets his car and is able to -- taxi. Get that limousine. Make sure we get the airport.

DAVIS: Have a good trip.

HUNTER: Mr. Perle, do you want to respond.

PERLE: Sure.

HUNTER: To Ms. Davis' question.

PERLE: General as you leave, I just want you to know I think your testimony is hopelessly confused and I want to explain why but I didn't want him to think I waited until he left the room before saying that.

HUNTER: OK, General we'll see you later, and Mr. Perle's got a few kind remarks about your testimony.

Go ahead, Mr. Perle.

PERLE: The question is about the precedent setting nature of an action intended to

preempt an even worse action that might take place and here I think we're talking about unique circumstances. Not to be too legalistic about it, the current state of relations between the United States and Iraq and indeed between the international community and Iraq is that a ceasefire is in place.

That ceasefire is contingent upon Iraq observing a number of United Nations resolutions all of which have been violated. Under international law and common practice and commonsense, a ceasefire predicated on compliance where there is non-compliance ceases itself to exist and I, therefore, believe that we would not be preempting as we would if we chose some innocent target in another set of circumstances and decided to attack. We would simply be responding to the breakdown of the ceasefire.

DAVIS: Mr. Perle, can you talk about other countries as well then? Do you see any concern that that could be leveraged by other countries to justify actions down the line?

PERLE: Actually I...

DAVIS: And should we be worried about that?

PERLE: I don't. I don't partly because of the unique circumstances. There is no -- none of the other instances that are often referred to in this context involve blatant violation of U.N. resolutions in the context of a ceasefire. But I also think that countries on important matters like war and peace pay close attention to their interests and the arguments they may advance are not the motivating factor. So I think it's important to distinguish between what drives an India or a Pakistan or any other country to take military action and the argument they may erect to support that. I don't think the decision making is affected by precedence of the kind that you're concerned about.

DAVIS: OK, thank you.

HUNTER: Mr. Schrock, you didn't have a chance to finish your last question because we had to go to the vote with a minute left. If you want to take a little more time, go right ahead sir.

SCHROCK: Sure, I would love to know Mr. Perle's, you know, the general said time is on our side. My guess is you do not believe that.

PERLE: No, I don't believe it and frankly I don't think he made a very convincing case in support of that cliché but it was one of many clichés. At the end of the day when you sought to elicit from him a reconciliation of the view that time is on our side with what he acknowledged to be our ignorance of how far along Saddam Hussein is, he had no explanation.

He seems to be preoccupied, and I'm quoting now, with building legitimacy, with exhausting all diplomatic remedies as though we hadn't been through diplomacy for the last decade, and relegating the use of force to a last resort, to building the broadest possible coalition, in short a variety of very amorphous, ephemeral concerns alongside which there's a stark reality and that is that every day that goes by, Saddam Hussein is busy perfecting those weapons of mass destruction that he already has, improving their capabilities, improving the means with which to deliver

them and readying himself for a future conflict.

So I don't believe that time is on our side and I don't believe that this fuzzy notion that the most important thing is building legitimacy, as if we lack legitimacy now, after all the U.N. resolutions that he's in blatant violation of, I don't believe that that should be the decisive consideration. So I think General Clark simply doesn't want to see us use military force and he has thrown out as many reasons as he can develop to that but the bottom line is he just doesn't want to take action. He wants to wait.

SCHROCK: Sure, in an ideal world it would be nice if we didn't have to use military action. I used the analogy when I was in the navy and the ship got under way at 0800. I'd rather be at the ship at 0600 than 0801. I think that makes a big difference and I'd rather be preemptive than reactive because 9/11/01 was reactive and we certainly don't want that again.

PERLE: If I could just say a word on this. I doubt that in any of the hearings that you've had on this subject, someone at some time or another has not said that force must always be a last resort. What does that mean? Does it mean that force can only be used in such desperate circumstances that even implausible alternatives to force have been attempted? Even implausible alternatives to force that have actually made it more difficult to accomplish the result by force?

I think it's one of the dumber cliches frankly to say that force must always be a last resort. Our purpose must always be to protect this country in the most effective way, while seeking to minimize the loss of life, not only on our own side but for those with whom we find ourselves in combat and sometimes waiting makes it worse. Sometimes pretending that sanctions can solve the problem makes it worse.

Look at the last decade of sanctions against Iraq since the end of the Gulf War. In many ways those sanctions have made it more difficult for us to take action today, so I don't believe that it's automatic that waiting is always better. You can wait to the point where when you then do resort to force you do so under highly adverse circumstances and that's exactly what we face today. If we wait long enough on the theory that because force is a last resort we can't use it now, we may well find ourselves taking more casualties with a less certain outcome when we ultimately do resort to the use of force.

So the standard here is the effective protection of our country and our interests and it is not some theoretical view that force can only be used after you've tried even implausible alternatives, and what's wrong with General Clark's analysis is that the alternative he's proposing is wildly ineffective and I think he knows that because when you tried to press him on what we do when the inspectors show up in the empty room, you got a lot of very fuzzy stuff about building legitimacy.

HUNTER: Mr. Larsen.

LARSEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Perle, like many others in the committee, I associate myself with the remarks of Mr. Snyder earlier. I've come to the position that what distinguishes us from terrorists, of course, is the rule of law and that logically from my perspective going through the United Nations makes a great deal of sense.

The president, I thought, was brilliant both in his speech and in his comments embracing UNSCOM (ph), pledged to work on the Palestinian and Israeli situation, Secretary Powell talking about paying them money in arrears that we owe the United Nations, clearly I think a strong move, and the president also squarely, as you said in your opening remarks, put the onus on the United Nations and also on Saddam Hussein in terms of keeping the peace.

What is perplexing to me is that by the same token, we've heard testimony over the last several weeks where most people from the administration say, but you know what, that can't work. Inspectors won't work. Nothing short of force will work.

So I guess my question is, why don't we just -- why doesn't the administration come forward and say well then let's declare war if in fact Condoleezza Rice, who says that you know we have proof now that there is this direct linkage and connection with Al Qaida, then clearly as has been outlined and also already authorized by this Congress, then why aren't we moving down this line?

If, to play the devil's advocate, if time is the issue and there's a feeling here that we're letting time slip by and the case has already been made, why not force? That would be my first question. Second would be along the lines of the resolution in 1998, there also to create regime change was discussion of a military tribunal to bring this guy before a military tribunal and try him as a war criminal but there hasn't been much talk about that. I, again, would like to know if that is a course that the administration would pursue.

And my last question deals with resources and you focused on that as well. It would seem to me that at the end of the day when you peel away the veneer on all these things, it all boils down to oil and I'm not saying that in any grand conspiratorial context, but from the standpoint that that's the resource that enables Saddam Hussein to purchase his weapons of mass destruction.

And if that's the resource and if we've said from the outset dating back to September the 11th that we're going to do everything to prevent terrorism, including shrinking up their resources, if there has been an exchange, if there is this community or collegiality amongst terrorists, clearly that is the method, that is the mode in which it can happen. What are the plans once we take Iraq to deal with oil and, hopefully from my perspective, to turn that resource into a humanitarian Marshall Plan for the very people that he's vanquished?

PERLE: Well, if I can start with that first. The oil of Iraq belongs to the people of Iraq and I would assume, because we've never seized the natural resources of another country, our purpose would be to make sure that that oil is used for the benefit of the people of Iraq. For the moment it's used for the benefit of some of the people of Iraq, Saddam and his cronies in particular. So that money would be used to rebuild the country and to settle Iraq's various legitimate obligations.

I would be delighted to see Saddam Hussein tried as a war criminal. Having used poisonous gas against civilians, the case seems to be open and shut that he is a war criminal. The problem is getting our hands on him but that if we do get our hands on him that would be an entirely appropriate next step.

You asked the question why not simply use force? The president's made the decision and I think overall it was the right decision to go to the United Nations to challenge

the United Nations to live up to its responsibilities and achieve Saddam's compliance with its resolutions.

I think it's very clear that they had no intention of doing that until the president put that demand in front of them, that they would have gone on cheerfully as they have for many years allowing Saddam to scorn and flaunt the U.N. resolutions and they would have continued to behave like the old League of Nations.

If we're talking about last chances, I suppose this is a last chance for the United Nations to acquit itself and to do the right thing. I'm not sure I would have been willing to extend the last chance given the dismal record of the past but he's embarked on that so we need to see what they're prepared to do.

But let me suggest this, if the best the United Nations can do is come up with an inspection regime that any sensible person knows will not succeed in uncovering Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, we will have accepted the appearance of the policy for the reality. There will be no policy, no effective policy behind any such inspection regime and an inspection regime that has 220 inspectors for a country the size of Iraq, that puts the key decision making official as to whether a violation has occurred or not in the hands of a Chinese official that operates under limits on where they can go, that is without sufficient mobility to go anywhere by surprise, that is not a serious inspection regime and if we settle for that, we will have made the decision not to confront Saddam Hussein.

LARSEN: I agree. I think it should be robust but I also think that if the president has yet to make up his mind with respect to the use of force, why should Congress make up its mind with respect to the use of force? Why shouldn't Congress go down the same line and follow the president and adhere to him along the lines of his resolve with the United Nations? And if that fails, as I'm sure the president will watch closely, come back to the Congress who I believe will also embrace him wholeheartedly having gone through those processes or if it turns into a sham, as you have pointed out.

PERLE: I think the president, and here I'm only guessing. I have no inside information. I think the president has made up his mind. He has concluded that unless the U.N. takes action to enforce a number of resolutions to which he referred in that very impressive speech to the United Nations, the United States and others who are willing to join with us will take action and I think he's asking for a congressional endorsement of that policy and I hope that the Congress gives him that support. I think it will be very helpful to him at the United Nations in getting their support and their cooperation.

But I have grave misgivings about the pretense that inspections can solve the problem. I simply don't believe they can. It's a practical judgment. You know can 220 inspectors in a country the size of Iraq...

LARSEN: Well, Mr. Rumsfeld was very clear that it's not inspections, it's disarmament and I think that should be the stated goal as well but it's equally -- I mean I can't believe with the sophistication that the country has and with our ability to get in there and the initial success Mr. Sprat (ph) outlined at one of the hearings that we had, the initial success that UMSCOM had when they went in there, I can't believe given all the information that we have as it relates to biological and chemical weapons that we're not going to be able to discover anything that's there. I find that

equally as incomprehensible.

PERLE: It is conceivable that we could discover something but that we will discover everything is inconceivable. If I may...

LARSEN: (inaudible)

PERLE: If I may add this point, General Clark referred on a number of occasions to creating a trigger, the idea being that once we -- inspections can establish a trigger was the phrase he used, the idea being that once we go in, if we find either that Saddam denies the inspectors access to a site or they actually find something at that site that somehow provides a trigger, I'm not quite sure what that means and he's not now here to explain it.

Does it mean that if inspectors who prevent them from visiting a site that we immediately go to war? Does it mean we go back to the United Nations for a resolution? Does it mean that we negotiate access to that site at a time at which agreement can be achieved?

What happens if the inspectors set out for a specific site because intelligence has become available that there is something to be found at that site and they're three miles down the road on the only road leading to the site and a tractor trailer has crashed, there's an accident, the whole area is cordoned off and the highway police, the Iraqi highway police say you can't pass here, there's been an accident? Does that mean war?

The trigger that the general refers to is not automatic. It isn't black and white and if I had to guess, I would guess that the inspections are more likely to produce a safety catch than a trigger because the situations are almost certain to be ambiguous and where they're not inherently ambiguous, Saddam can make them ambiguous. So the idea that we will be better off with an inspection regime than acting on the basis of the knowledge we already possess seems to me quite misplaced.

HUNTER: Mr. Perle, Mr. Skelton would like to ask a question or make a comment.

SKELTON: I'm seeking back in my recollection in 1991 was there not an earlier resolution by Congress that preceded the one that authorized the one to use force? There were two resolutions, as I remember.

PERLE: The resolution I recall, the one that was voted rather closely in both Houses but more closely in the Senate, was the resolution authorizing the use of force. I don't recall one prior to that.

SKELTON: Well that's my recollection. OK, thank you.

HUNTER: Mr. Perle, let me -- I keep wanting to call you doctor. I'm not sure why.

PERLE: I never finished the dissertation, so.

HUNTER: You must look like a very scholarly person I guess. Let me just make an observation and see what your response might be. In the international community there seemed to be, and perhaps this is an oversimplification, two views of how to proceed in these kinds of situations. I just spent the last two days taking part in a

Russian- American forum and frankly I think that we have a lot to learn from the Russians because of their experience in matters that are very similar to the matters that we're discussing, particularly with regard to Chechnya.

And, they have observed over the last several years I guess that their activities in fighting terrorism often beget more terrorism. They used the example of apprehending, I guess, and killing Qatab (ph), which generated a spurt, a spat of more terrorism, and others that they have captured over the years which have generated a spurt of more terrorism.

And so, they caution us much as General Clark would to try other things first. Then on the other hand, I've been quite a student of the Israeli experience over the last number of decades and I observed for many years that the Israelis looked at the opportunities to combat terrorism as saying if you commit an act of terror, be ready for what follows, and for many years it worked and then the Israeli experience seemed to soften some and episodes of terrorism grew.

So there is this notion somehow that being tolerant to a point with terrorists will somehow get us to the point where we can deal with it in some other way and I haven't been able to identify that other way. So, I guess my question is this, the rationale that being tough with terrorists begets more terrorism is one point of view that's definitely out there.

That's what the Russians think, the Russians that were here, that's what they think today. And, on the other hand, we can look at experiences that we've had where we've stood up against terrorists and over time been successful, and I just would like to get your impressions.

PERLE: It's a very interesting question. In the Russian case, particularly with respect to Chechnya, I think the Russians have done a great deal of damage to the civilian population of Chechnya and have by the careless way in which they've used force, have killed a great many civilians who were not terrorists.

Now if you've seen your family destroyed. You're the sole survivor. You weren't engaged in any act of terrorism. The attack against your family was without any obvious justification, might you become a terrorist? Might you be so embittered that you will take up arms against the people who did this? It's entirely possible but the context is very important.

Everything depends on why the terrorists are motivated to become terrorists in the first place and I don't believe the terrorists we now face, particularly the Al Qaida type of terrorism is a product of anything we have done. It is a product of who we are and what we are and what obstacle we put in the place of the ambition of these terrorists, and in that sense, we're not producing terrorists by the action we take. We're producing terrorists because we exist and I know of no way that we can accommodate terrorists on that issue except by suicide. So, the right policy it seems to me is to oppose terrorism with the full range of instruments available to us.

I had the privilege of meeting not long ago with Lee Kwan Yu (ph) from Singapore, a very wise man and he said on this occasion, he said what did we ever do to justify acts of terror against us by Al Qaida associated groups? What that rhetorical question drove home for me was the absence of the connection between any action or provocation by us and the terrorists who arrayed against us. Singapore had done

nothing that could be used as a basis for a plot to destroy Singapore and yet the Singapore authorities uncovered a plot to do grave damage in that country.

So I think we have to use the means at our disposal. To say that if we fight terrorism we will breed more terrorists is to throw up our hands and accept defeat in the face of terrorism and that clearly is not sensible or an acceptable outcome.

HUNTER: Thank you very much and thank you for being here. You've been very generous with your time this morning. We've been here for three hours and I know that I can speak for other members of Congress in wanting to thank you and General Clark for helping us to gain a better perspective of these issues and hopefully through the media you'll have helped the American people do the same thing. Mr. Skelton.

SKELTON: Let me add my special thanks to Mr. Perle. It's certainly good to see you again and thank you for your excellent testimony.

PERLE: It's good to see you. Thank you.

HUNTER: Thank you very much.